

Evolución histórica del proceso de formación laboral de los estudiantes con discapacidad intelectual

Historical evolution of the labor training process of students with intellectual disabilities

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Resumen: La formación laboral del estudiante con discapacidad intelectual tiene lugar, desde el punto de vista psicopedagógico, en la educación y en el trabajo, lo que ha sido estudiado históricamente por diferentes autores. Desde esta perspectiva la formación laboral constituye una vía para el desarrollo de la personalidad en este tipo de estudiante. Teniendo en cuenta esos antecedentes, el objetivo fue analizar la evolución histórica del proceso de formación laboral de los estudiantes con discapacidad intelectual. Se ofrece como resultado un análisis de las etapas por las que ha transitado el referido proceso desde el año 1962 hasta la actualidad.

Palabras clave: Formación Laboral; Discapacidad intelectual; Educación especial; Retraso mental

Abstract: The job training of the student with intellectual disability takes place, from the psychopedagogical point of view, in education and work, which has been historically studied by different authors. From this perspective, job training is a way to develop personality in this type of student. Taking into account this background, the objective was to analyze the historical evolution of the labor training process of students with intellectual disabilities. An analysis of the stages through which the aforementioned process has transited from 1962 to the present is offered as a result.

Keywords: Job training; Intellectual disability; Special education; Mental retardation

Introduction

The education of students with intellectual disabilities is a priority of the Cuban educational system. In this purpose, a fundamental component is job training to become an essential element of the personal development of any subject and essentially of those who have a special educational need of an intellectual

nature, guaranteeing them a preparation for their adult and independent life through socio-labor insertion. Consequently, in the work the indicators are singled out to measure the potential of the labor training in order to correct - to compensate for the behavior of this scholar.

The article considers the experiences of Ramírez (2008), Fernández (2010), and Rodríguez (2014), who provide important references to establish indicators, deadlines and the fundamental stages of labor training for students with special educational needs, particularly with intellectual disability.

With this purpose, we intend to carry out a periodization of the historical evolution of the labor training process for students with intellectual disabilities, offering as a result an analysis of the stages through which the aforementioned process has transited from 1962 to the present.

Development

For the analysis that characterizes the historical evolution and the tendencies of the labor formation of schoolchildren with intellectual disability, from the study of the bibliographic sources and the theoretical systematization carried out, it was necessary to establish as essential indicators:

- Conception of work training in the education of students with intellectual disabilities.
- Corrective-compensatory nature of work training in the training process of students with intellectual disabilities.
- Methodological treatment of corrective-compensatory work training for students with intellectual disabilities.

The indicators serve as a reference to carry out the characterization of the stages and their corresponding milestones, which determine the historical evolution of labor training as a process in special education for students with intellectual disabilities.

First stage (1962 - 1980): organization and structure of special educational services to develop labor training with the creation of the Department of Differentiated Teaching in the year 1962. It extends until the year 1980, where they begin to implement aspects of the improvement of Special Education in the course 1977 - 1978.

It is in 1962 that a set of actions aimed at creating a methodological and administrative structure to provide specialized services to all students who for various reasons did not march at the same pace as the majority, considered then as "different".

In this historical moment, Special Education is considered as a parallel teaching, and it was called differentiated teaching. It was reasoned that it was for subjects who do not learn, with behavioral and psychiatric alterations, from a clinical and rehabilitative model of disability that was based on the theoretical position of the so-called Pedagogy of defects.

From this moment, the first programs, methodological orientations, and other texts related to the job training of these students are published, whose methodological guidelines emphasize the need to develop manual skills in students with mental retardation through subjects such as Psychomotor, Orthophrenia and Occupational Therapy.

Its purpose was essentially directed towards the correction-compensation of the intellectual deficiencies present in the aforementioned students through the realization of manual activities such as: making of ornaments, works with diverse materials, among others, but not to the correction-compensation of certain affective processes that secondarily affected them.

In the 1972-1973 academic year, the study plan of Labor Education subject, like the rest of the subjects of Special Education, reaches a level of consolidation in accordance with the demands of that historical period.

In 1975 the Improvement of the National System of Education begins, in which the education assumes its general, polytechnic and labor character. This concept is defined in the First Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba held that same year. Based on these foundations, the Special Education Subsystem begins a period of transformations that extends until the 1980s in the educational procedure and the specialized treatment for the correction-compensation of the alterations derived from the primary defect in students with a delay mental, and in the organization of the methodological work and the didactic direction of the labor training process in the Special School.

Characterize this stage essential element that can be summarized in the following aspects:

- The conception of work training with a therapeutic nature (focused on the defect) in the education of students with intellectual disabilities.
- The assumption of labor training with a corrective-compensatory nature in the education of students with intellectual disabilities.
- Over-dimensioning of attention to intellectual deficiencies to the detriment of motivational affectives in the methodological treatment of labor training with a corrective-compensatory nature.

Second stage (1981 – 2010): improvement of job training. The introduction of new modifications for labor training in Special Education in the 1980-1981 academic year is framed as a milestone. It concludes with the start of its update in the 2010-2011 courses.

These modifications caused substantial changes in the educational procedure and the specialized treatment for the correction-compensation of the disorders resulting from the primary defect in students with intellectual disabilities, and in the organization of the methodological and didactic work of the schools. Even the direction of the labor training process is not a work priority.

The labor training process was structured in three stages that responded to the objectives and tasks of the education of this type of students.

- Propedeutic or manual work, from 1st to 4th grade. Its fundamental objective is adjusted to the familiarization of students with the characteristics of productive activity, knowledge about the different trades, and the development of skills in the management of work tools and the construction of simple articles.

In this stage the curriculum of the subject Labor Education is conceived to prepare the students in the acquisition of a basic system of knowledge and polytechnic skills supported in the study of materials, elements of technology and technology, the organization of production of different types of objects, all in correspondence with the technical thinking and the constructive capacities. It is also proposed, in this way, to educate through the work processes the fundamental qualities of the personality such as love of work, the working class, industriousness, responsibility, among others.

- Vocational guidance, from 5th to 6th grade, whose fundamental objective is adjusted to the motivation of the student for an occupation and the development of work habits through their participation in work activities in the workshop.

- Professional preparation, from 7th to 9th grade, with the aim of preparing these students in the arts of a job and turn them into skilled workers.

In the 1980s, the Cuban Special Education reaffirmed its identity and labor training had a theoretical, scientific and methodological foundation superior to that of previous years. Within the directions, perspectives and forecasts of the development of the same it is stated that children with some deficiency should not limit their participation in the activities of social life.

It is then when the country begins a program for the assembly of workshops of labor preparation and thus to fulfill the objectives of the programs of the plan of study and to qualify to the students in diverse offices.

Methods such as exposition, joint elaboration, observation, demonstration and independent work are used in workshop classes; these arise from the improvement in methodological orientations and programs of the year 1982 directed to the Labor Education in the workshops of crafts, carpentry, among others.

In the same way, this instrumentation that from the didactic point of view was carried out was insufficient, taking into account that the possibility of resources that were available to obtain results and the use of procedures that facilitated the correction process- compensation to the alterations in behavior manifested secondarily in the intellectually disabled was still scarce, and very little oriented from the methodological bases that this process needed.

From the constant transformations, changes in the methodological order are imposed in order to guarantee the development of the labor training process of the students. This stage focuses on the redesign and reorganization of two stages instead of the three previously established.

- The first: propaedeutic, manual work and career guidance, from the 1st to 6th grade.
- The second: professional preparation, focused on the training of students from 7th to 9th grade with mild intellectual disabilities for learning a trade that allows them to enter the world of work.

As can be observed, in this period the educational policy towards labor training changes. New state programs are implemented to ensure the employment of the disabled in general and job training is declared as a priority of teaching for students with intellectual disabilities from the understanding that it is the most appropriate way to enhance their preparation for the independent adult life and specify their socio-labor integration. This stage coincides with the pedagogical position of the so-called Pedagogy of potentialities.

The didactic work is maintained with what was oriented in the previous stage, methods such as expository, joint elaboration, observation, demonstration, and independent work were those used in the workshop classes, without paying greater attention to procedures that consolidate them.

The Consultant Center for Labor Training in Holguín province was created in 2000 by a group of researchers, associated with the national program "Improvement of the National Education System" of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Cuba. In their associated research project, they begin to investigate topics related to the process of labor training in the different teachings, which contribute to the scientific methodological improvement of the aforementioned process.

In the 2004-2005 academic year, the strategy for students' job training was improved with the aim of developing actions that, from the corrective-compensatory point of view, lead the preparation for independent adult life and guarantee socio-labor integration, although their scope is still limited for the achievement of a comprehensive education of these students.

Achievements reached through the continuous improvement of the process of job training of students, contribute to the fact that from the 2006-2007 academic year the Ministry of Education declared labor training as one of the priorities in the subsystem of Special Education to guarantee the preparation basic and labor of students with special educational needs.

Characterize this stage elements that can be summarized in the following aspects:

- Conception of job training in the education of students with intellectual disabilities from a psychopedagogical approach, focused on the potential of the individual, although with an oversized attention to intellectual-type deficiencies.
- The assumption of job training as the central axis of the training process of the student with intellectual disability, as it is conceived as a process integrated by the propaedeutic stages, vocational guidance, and professional preparation.
- The application of expository methods and the organization of work preparation workshops in the methodological instrumentation of the job training of students with intellectual disabilities, although with a predominance of correction-compensation of intellectual deficiencies.

Third stage (2011 – present): update of the fundamentals of the labor training process, the adaptation of the programs for the work in the workshops of labor training in Special Education (2012-2013) as part of the third improvement.

It is an essential objective in this stage to contribute to the integral formation of the personality of the student with intellectual disability in a way that allows him to establish adequate and stable social relations with those around him, and independently exercise his socially productive activity.

The new study plan proposed for students with mild intellectual disabilities and with more complex educational needs, maintains the form of school organization that is based on a unified and diverse life regime, where children enter from the first grades and remain in the same school, and in the same pedagogical and student collective until their graduation (from preparatory to 9th grade, and in some

cases up to the fourth cycle). This historical period is developed with the budgets of the so-called Pedagogy of diversity.

The current structure of education for these students is maintained, with the ten grades, levels and cycles that it comprises. The fourth cycle is introduced for students who finish the 9th grade without age for graduation. The three stages of the labor training that were conceived from the previous curricula are maintained for this teaching and its cycles.

During the 7th, 8th and 9th grades, students must consolidate their basic general and work preparation that allows them to continue their studies at the Special School or the Trade School, or to join a work center.

In light of this improvement, methodological guidelines and programs (2012-2013, and thereafter) are developed for the work in the workshops on job training in Special Education, with the purpose of providing the teacher with suggestions, guidelines and recommendations for the treatment of each unit of the programs and workshops. The methods that should not be lacking for the work in the workshops are observation, demonstration, and independent work.

Although this proposal is very appropriate for the development of the process under better conditions, we believe that what is proposed is still insufficient in order to achieve the integration of the cognitive and affective spheres in the labor training process in such a way that its role in the formation of this student is more integral.

On the other hand, didactic proposals continue to be limited in order to achieve correction-compensation of affective processes, with emphasis on student behavior, with proposals that specify the methods and procedures for the teacher to efficiently conduct the entire learning process.

Since the 2016-2017 academic year, the third stage of the improvement of the National Education System has begun to be implemented in the country, which corresponds to the need to train high-quality students capable of participating actively in economic and social development in different formative contexts.

One of the most urgent reference frames of debate within the transformations of education is that referring to Special Education terminologies, since the fact that the systematization of the main categories and concepts as a field of study emerged from the socio-labor transformations that were occurring in the world, induces to highlight a new trend to what in Cuba approximately until 2016 was called students with mental retardation, a term that is now obsolete because it does not correspond to current conceptions that recognize

limitations and disadvantages, but they do not center the defect but the conserved capacities, the virtues and potentialities of the people as starting point of the ascent to new zones of proximal development.

We consider that it is pertinent that in the proposals of methods and procedures of this process focused on children, adolescents and young people who travel through Early Childhood and Special Education, deepen in the ways that from the didactic correct the alterations of behavior of students with intellectual disability in the Special Schools.

The elements that characterize this stage can be summarized in the following aspects:

- Conception of job training in the education of students with intellectual disabilities from a psychopedagogical approach, focused on the differences of the individual, although with an oversized attention to the deficiencies of intellectual type.
- The assumption of job training as the central axis of the training process of the student with intellectual disability as it is conceived as a process integrated by the propaedeutic, vocational guidance and professional preparation stages.
- Enrichment of the foundations and didactic instrumentation for the management of the labor training process of students with intellectual disabilities, although the predominance of attention to intellectual deficiencies is maintained.

Conclusions

The historical analysis of the labor training process of students with intellectual disabilities in Special Education makes it possible to identify historical trends as:

- From the conception of work training with a therapeutic character in the education of students with intellectual disabilities to one based on the psychopedagogical approach, although with an oversized attention to intellectual deficiencies.
- From an assumption of labor training with corrective-compensatory nature of students with intellectual disabilities, to their assumption as the central axis of the training process to be structured in the propaedeutic stages, vocational guidance and professional preparation.
- From a methodological treatment of work training focused on the attention to the intellectual deficiencies of students with intellectual disabilities, to the enrichment of the foundations and

instrumentation for their direction, although maintaining the predominance of attention to intellectual deficiencies.

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